

Randolph County Commissioners

June 8, 2004

The Randolph County Board of Commissioners met in special budget session at 5:00 p.m. in the Administration Conference Room, County Office Building, 725 McDowell Road, Asheboro, NC. Commissioners Holmes, Kemp, Frye, Davis, and Mason were present.

Emergency Services

Neil Allen, Emergency Services Director, discussed changes at the Archdale ambulance base. Grading has been completed for the new building, and renovations to the existing building should be completed by August. Mr. Allen stated that ambulance response time from the Archdale base has decreased one minute and ten seconds (from 8:37 to 7:27) since the prime-time ambulance was added. This is a 15% reduction in time. With the new unit, 87% of calls from the Archdale area are responded to by one of the Archdale ambulances. Prior to the new unit, this number was at 74%.

Mr. Allen said that an increase in ambulance fee collections are providing funds to create a position dedicated to Emergency Management. Randolph County is receiving Homeland Security Grant funds that are accompanied by mandates that we be better prepared for any emergency or disaster. This new position will work full-time on emergency preparedness.

Mr. Allen mentioned that 6 of the 7 local cell phone companies are now providing the name, number and location to 911. Cingular is the only company that does not have the software in place to provide location yet.

Mr. Allen also addressed the need for 2 more fire inspector vehicles, which are in the proposed budget. He reported that the County no longer does fire inspections for any municipality. He reviewed East Side and West Side Fire Departments' requests for an increase in their fire district tax.

The Board discussed the possibility of asking our state legislators to introduce a bill to require volunteer fire departments to provide an annual audit report to county commissioners.

Public Works

David Townsend III, Public Works Director, told the Board that his budget is almost identical to last year's. The tipping fees have remained the same. However, the BFI contract will have an increase based on the CPI, and there is a 3% increase for that built into the proposed budget. They have received many favorable comments about the road into the solid waste facility that was paved this year.

Mr. Townsend said he is almost finished with the Tower Components grant that he has been helping Ramseur with. Five homes have been chosen for renovation through the Scattered Site Housing grant. The County has contracted with a habilitation specialist to examine and evaluate these homes.

Mr. Townsend reported that they are now requiring tire merchants who bring old tires to the landfill to stack them in a trailer that is provided for that purpose. White goods are bringing in some revenue. Mulch was sold this spring and will be sold again this fall.

Public Works bills haulers who come by the scale house. Account information is sent to the office daily by modem. If an account is more than 30 days delinquent, that hauler is charged interest and becomes a cash customer only.

The Board told Mr. Townsend they wanted him to start working on the issue of water in the coming year.

Social Services

Martha Sheriff, Social Services Director, reported that even though her total budget increased by \$272,670, the County's portion of the budget decreased by \$9,000.

She stated that she had requested 3 new positions, and the 2 interpreter positions are included in the proposed budget. She said there was already \$16,000 in their budget for contracted interpreter services, so that money can be applied to the 2 interpreter positions. DSS sees about 80 Hispanics a month needing interpreter services, but the interpreters will also be needed in court, on child protective investigations, foster care visits, etc. An income maintenance caseworker position for Family and Children's Medicaid Services was also requested but was not included in the proposed budget. The total cost for this position, including fringe benefits, is \$33,093. The County would have to pay 50% of the position's cost.

Ms. Sheriff emphasized that she can no longer rely on lapsed salaries to cover the expense of the 10 unfunded positions the Board awarded her several years ago. The economy is causing fewer turnovers. Two years ago, 79 employees left DSS; last year, 60; and this year, 28.

Ms. Sheriff mentioned a new line item in the DSS budget--\$30,000 for contracted legal services to help with termination of parental rights.

DSS's total Medicaid budget is \$116,349,623. About 20,000 people in Randolph County are receiving Medicaid. There are over 3000 Food Stamp cases now.

Their transportation budget is up from \$90,000 to \$140,000. This is for visits to medical facilities and for other medical-related trips.

Ms. Sheriff said that they had phased out the Work First vehicle program and put that money into the Daycare program.

Governing Body & Administration

Deputy Finance Officer Jane Leonard told the Board that the Governing Body's budget had changed very little. Association dues went down slightly; that money was moved to travel. Administration's budget is up over \$114,000 due to increases in property, liability, and worker's compensation insurance.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

J. Harold Holmes, Chairman

Darrell L. Frye

Phil Kemp

Robert B. Davis

Robert O. Mason

Alice D. Dawson, Clerk to the Board